

Message Text

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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY AF/S:JDAVIDOW:DH

APPROVED BY P:AMB. NEWSOM

AF/S:GMOOSE

NEA/IRN:HPRECHT

S/S-O:SVALERGA

AF:RMMOOSE

-----113339 170716Z /11

O 162351Z AUG 78 ZFF6

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMUASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE 0538

S E C R E T STATE 208543

NODIS

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-2

TAGS: RH, UK, IR

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: APPROACH TO THE SHAH

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US-UK
TO APPROACH SHAH AND REQUEST THAT HE URGE BISHOP MUZOREWA
TO GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO ATTENDANCE AT AN ALL-
PARTIES MEETING. IN JULY 9 CONVERSATION SHAH EXPRESSED
KEEN INTEREST IN RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS TO UNDER SECRETARY
NEWSOM AND SAID THAT HE HAD GIVEN LIMITED FINANCIAL
SUPPORT TO MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT
THE SHAH WOULD WELCOME OUR REQUESTS FOR COOPERATION IN
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OUR SOUTHERN AFRICAN NEGOTIATING EFFORTS.

2. ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY, LONDON IS ASKED TO DISCUSS
ON PRIORITY BASIS WITH FCO POSSIBILITY OF A JOINT
APPROACH BY US-UK AMBASSADORS TO THE SHAH, OR HIS
PRINCIPAL ADVISORS, IN WHICH THE FOLLOWING POINTS WOULD
BE MADE:

A. THE SITUATION IN RHODESIA IS DETERIORATING.

THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT HAS NOT GAINED THE WIDESPREAD AFRICAN BACKING THAT ITS SUPPORTERS HAD HOPED FOR. THE AMNESTY PROGRAM HAS MET WITH ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS. THE MAJORITY OF THE GUERRILLA FORCES CLEARLY LACK SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO WARRANT GIVING UP THEIR ARMS.

B. GIVEN THESE CONDITIONS, WE MAY BE APPROACHING A SITUATION OF NO-RETURN. THE INTERNAL PARTIES MAY MOVE FORWARD WITH THEIR PLANS FOR ELECTIONS AND THE INSTALLATION OF A NOMINALLY MAJORITY-RULED GOVERNMENT, WHICH MIGHT PROVE INCAPABLE OF PACIFYING THE COUNTRY OR BOLSTERING THE ECONOMY. THE GUERRILLA LEADERSHIP WOULD PROBABLY STEP UP THE FIGHTING, CONVINCED OF ITS ULTIMATE VICTORY. THE RESULT MIGHT BE A BLACK VS. BLACK CIVIL WAR, WITH GREATER INSTABILITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AS A WHOLE, AND FURTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR SOVIET AND CUBAN INTERVENTION.

C. US-UK BELIEVE THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER FOR AN ATTEMPT AT NEGOTIATIONS. FOR SEVERAL MONTHS WE HAVE SUGGESTED AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE AS THE BEST MEANS OF FOSTERING THE TYPE OF DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS WE HAVE IN MIND.

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D. AT DAR ES SALAAM IN APRIL THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AGREED TO ATTEND SUCH A MEETING. THE MEMBERS OF THE SALISBURY GROUP WERE INITIALLY NEGATIVE. HOWEVER, AS THEY HAVE MORE REALISTICALLY APPRAISED THEIR SITUATION THEY HAVE BECOME LESS OPPOSED. WE ARE NOW SUGGESTING A PRIVATE MEETING OF ONLY THE PRINCIPALS WITH ONE OR TWO AIDES IN A SECLUDED ENVIRONMENT. THE MEETING WOULD BE CHAIRED BY DR. OWEN AND SECRETARY VANCE. SMITH IS WILLING TO ATTEND, AND WE THINK SITHOLE AND CHIEF CHIRAU WOULD GO ALONG AS WELL.

E. THE PRINCIPAL OPPONENT OF THE ALL-PARTIES MEETING IS BISHOP MUZOREWA. DESPITE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FOR SUCH A MEETING AMONG SOME WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY, HE REMAINS GENERALLY NEGATIVE TOWARD THE IDEA. MUZOREWA IS APPARENTLY FEARFUL THAT AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD BRING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT INTO A SETTLEMENT WOULD FURTHER ERODE HIS POPULAR SUPPORT AND MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO ATTAIN THE POLITICAL POWER HE NOW SEES WITHIN HIS GRASP.

F. WE HAVE TOLD THE BISHOP THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO LOSE BY ATTENDING AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING, AND THAT IN DOING

SO HE WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT HE IS PREPARED TO LEAVE
NO STONE UNTURNED IN HIS SEARCH FOR PEACE. FURTHER, WE
HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE CAN ATTEND WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS.
WE ASSUME THAT EACH OF THE PARTIES WILL COME TO THE
CONFERENCE TABLE SUPPORTING THEIR OWN PROPOSALS FOR A
SETTLEMENT, WHICH, IN HIS CASE WILL BE THE SALISBURY
AGREEMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR ALL
OF THE PARTIES TO COMPROMISE. WE SHALL ACCEPT ANY
SETTLEMENT, CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN PRINCIPLES, WHICH IS
SATISFACTORY TO THE PARTIES THEMSELVES.

G. WE BELIEVE THAT A MESSAGE FROM THE SHAH TO THE
BISHOP, URGING HIS PARTICIPATION IN AN ALL-PARTIES

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MEETING MIGHT BE INSTRUMENTAL IN CONVINCING MUZOREWA THAT
FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AT AN ALL-
PARTIES MEETING WOULD BE WORTHWHILE.

3. FOR TEHRAN: PLEASE TAKE NO ACTION ON THIS CABLE
UNTIL DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN INFORMED OF FCO'S RESPONSE.
YOUR COMMENTS IN ADVANCE OF FCO RESPONSE ARE, OF COURSE,
WELCOMED. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS, PLANNING MEETINGS, NEGOTIATIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 aug 1978
Decapton Date: 01 jan 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE208543
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JDAVIDOW:DH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840140-2313
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780856/aaaabvbw.tel
Line Count: 144
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7ee38662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1717093
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: APPROACH TO THE SHAH
TAGS: PDIP, PDEV, PINT, RH, US, IR, UK, ZI, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMAD REZA), (MUZOREWA, ABEL)
To: LONDON TEHRAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7ee38662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014